



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 60/23

CONVERSATION IN WASHINGTON

A statement by Prime Minister Diefenbaker on June 6, 1960, to the House of Commons.

With the permission of the House I should like to report in general on the visit which I made last Friday and Saturday to Washington at the invitation of President Eisenhower. As I pointed out on my arrival there, this was not a formal visit; it was the kind of call which one makes on a close neighbour with whom one is on friendly terms and with whom one is in the habit of talking over matters of mutual interest.

I particularly point out the warmth of the welcome extended to me because I represented Canada, both by the President himself, his Secretary of State and all the officials and members of the public with whom I came in contact. We are bound to have differences between our countries, as friends and neighbours will, but beneath the surface of whatever intermittent strains may arise in our relationship there is a vein of continued understanding and goodwill that springs not only from our heritage but also from the common sense of the importance of being united in safeguarding common values.

I am going to refer to one or two of the matters which were discussed, although I know the House will not expect me to go into any detail on the substance of those talks. We found ourselves in agreement with regard to the circumstances which led to the summit failure and also the position which the Western nations should now adopt individually and within the NATO alliance in their relations with the Soviet Union. The need is to establish and preserve an equilibrium between the maintenance of defensive preparedness on the one hand and on the other a continued readiness to retain existing contacts with the Soviet world and extend those contacts on the basis of mutual agreement whenever the opportunity arises.

Future NATO Policy.

I discussed with the President matters connected with the future policies in NATO. I expressed the view that